

Scouting About

News from the South African Scout Association.

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SCOUTS
South Africa

Member of the World Organisation of the Scout Movement

0860SCOUTS

BADEN-POWELL AS EDUCATOR

As a 19 year old, I walked in to see how the old Troop was doing and found four patrols of Scouts 'doing their thing' after their SM and Assistant had walked out on the boys. I knew some of the PLs who were with the Troop eighteen months earlier when I was transferred in my job to Johannesburg. Now returned, I was unanimously elected their new Scoutmaster, they would have no argument.

Fortunately the Group had a fantastic Group Scouter who took me under his wing, Soon had me Warranted and two years later I had earned my Wood Badge.

What has this got to do with "B-P as Educator" you might ask. Well in those first few years as a "young" Scouter, I flew by the seat of my pants, as the saying goes. Doing with the Troop, those things I had enjoyed as a boy and as so many "young" Scouters have done before and since, complained about the restrictions placed on me by my D.C and P.O. & R., never considering the deeper aspects of the fantastic movement I had rejoined.

Only after Wood Badge could I see that all this "fun and action" was only a part of B-P's greater design for Scouting. In 1967, Scoutings 60th anniversary – Scouting South Africa put out a pamphlet, written by Dr. Ernst G. Malherbe, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Natal, detailing this subtle design B-P had built into his idea, originally for other youth groups to use; then, in spite of that, it grew into the massive International Scout

Movement we know today. I recommend, if you can find a copy in your Provincial Shop library, read it and be amazed.

He wrote that B-P was lauded, mainly, for his military achievements and very little for his fantastic ideas on education. Many great, purely educators, have come up with revolutionary systems and programmes in the past 100 years, they have been tried and have now fallen by the wayside. Dr Malherbe writes; "Even in the most up-to-date editions of the history of education, there is hardly a line on Baden-Powell or a systematic treatment of his Scout Movement.



Dr. Ernst G. Malherbe

This omission is curious, because to my mind, Baden-Powell is of far greater and more fundamental significance than any one of the others mentioned. I am convinced that Baden-Powell's educational ideas will continue to live long after the other systems come to be regarded merely as a museum curiosity."

We now see, how, so many of our schools are building B-P's outdoor activity ideas into their programme. We Scouters grumble because we see our Scouts going off to camps, hikes and Scouting type activities with their schools and missing our long planned programme. Maybe we should be flattered, these advance looking schools appreciate, what Dr Malherbe calls "B-P's great educational contribution!" You and I just use that 'contribution' every time we meet with our Cubs or Scouts.

Winter 2009

CONGRATULATIONS SPRINGBOK SCOUTS



Ruth Alexandra Smit - Free State
Arianna Abaroa - Western Cape
Ronnie Kellerman - Western Cape
Brian Tompkins - Western Cape
Tristan Goldie - Western Cape
Anna-Marie Greyling - Western Cape
Amy Collyer - KwaZulu Natal
Laura-Anne Murphy - KwaZulu Natal

TWO SOUTH AFRICAN SCOUTS SUMMIT MOUNT EVEREST

John Black of 1st Discovery Scout Group and **Robby Kojetin** of 1st Germiston Scout Group, both of Gauteng Province, have summated Mount Everest. John on 21 May and Robby on 23 May 2009. Their fascinating and riveting reports of the event of their lives can be read on South African Scoutings web site – www.scouting.org.za

Chief Scout's Commissioner, Brian February, has sent them a message of congratulations on behalf of the Chief Scout and every member of South African Scouting.

be prepared....

DUTY TO GOD



WHAT IT MEANS

In his wisdom, Baden Powell wrote Duty to God as the very first part of the Scout Promise by which we all try to abide. To help you understand the great importance of Duty to God, we reprint the following beautiful and compelling piece by Helen Scobie which appeared in "Veld Lore" Spring 1979.

THE GOOD LIFE

I live a good life . . . I go to Church occasionally, don't cheat or steal . . . even help old ladies across the street - isn't that enough?

Think about it for a moment. What has God done for you? Most people would believe in a Supreme Being, a Creator of everything. It's hard to believe that this intricate universe "just happened" and even harder to believe that it "just happens" to keep going without "Someone" watching over it. Look at the beauty of the flowers - the magnificence of the mountains - the grandeur of

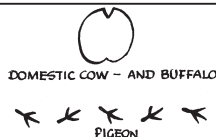
the oceans. Consider the mystery of thought or gravity.

As Scouts we believe that there is a Supreme Being. We acknowledge this Supreme Being to be a personal God and that we have a duty to try to know, love and serve Him. While Scouting is based on a faith in God, it is also nondenominational. Scouts can belong to any branch of the Christian Church; the Jewish Faith, Buddhist, Mohammedan or any other religion.

The first and most obvious way that we can do our DUTY TO GOD is by learning more about our particular faith by being active in the worship and work of our Church, Temple or Mosque. But DUTY TO GOD is much more than this. There is no point at which religion begins or ends.

The prophet Micah gives us a picture of our DUTY TO GOD. He wonders what to give God . . . burnt offerings? . . . whole rivers of olive oil? . . . the sacrifice of his child? No! The Lord has told us what he requires of us . . . "to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God" (see Micah 6:6-8)

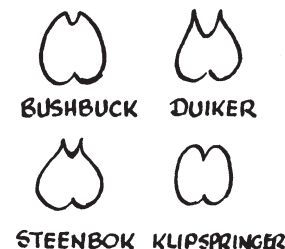
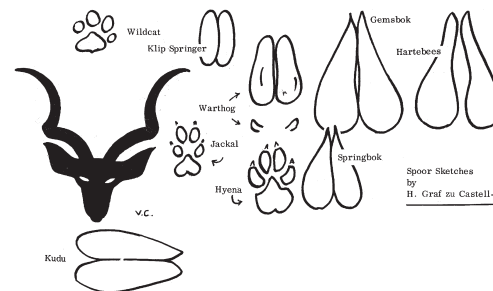
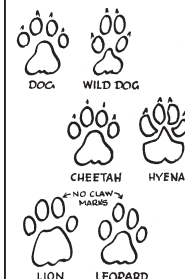
DUTY TO GOD IS NOT SOMETHING WE DO - IT IS A WAY OF LIFE!



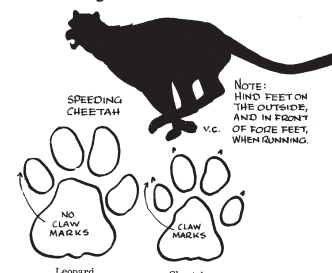
It's almost a lost art. Rediscover it. Spooring! Apart from a few Bushmen, game rangers, hunters and naturalists, and a handful of others, including some Scouts, spooring - or tracking - is a veldcraft that is vanishing.

You will find that with Spooring you start studying wildlife and Nature in general, from the ground up. Knowledge of animal tracks, or spoor, is impossible without knowledge of the animals, birds and reptiles themselves - what they look like, where they live, what they eat, how they behave, and much more.

Many Scouting skills are brought into play when you go spooring, as you sharpen up your observation of



know where small animals, birds or even insects live. From there progress to larger trips and maybe, finally, that visit to one of our Game Parks where a Ranger will accompany you, on foot, and you can discover the "story" of what went on in that part of the world the night before.



Let Baden-Powell help you.

The first thing you should do is read Camp Fire Yarn No 12 in B-P's "Scouting for boys", entitled "Spooring", Then go on to read Camp Fire Yarn No 13 which deals with reading sign and making deductions. Camp Fire Yarn No 14 "Stalking", then Camp Fire Yarn No 15 on animals and their behaviour. Then get hold of a copy of Vic Clapham's VELD LORE Scrapbook No 2 Hiking, Scrapbook No 5 Veldcraft, Scrapbook No 6 Nature. You will be well armed to tackle your fascinating adventure.

NOTE: HIND FEET ON THE OUTSIDE, AND IN FRONT OF TOE FEET, WHEN RUNNING.

THE LEXDEN PATROL LEADER TRAINING UNIT

A GOLDEN JUBILEE

In July 1959 seventeen Patrol Leaders and Seconds from the three Troops in the 2nd Durban Y.M.C.A. Group, made their way to the beautiful Scout Training Grounds - Lexden - in the Northern suburb of Pietermaritzburg to learn something of the business of leading their Scouts, at a Patrol Leader Training Course run by Dudley Forde.

Little did they realize that their five day adventure would eventuate into now widely acclaimed, nationally recognized and commercially emulated twelve day course held annually in several of the country's provinces each year.

The acorn grows

Over these fifty years Patrol Leader Training developed and thrived at Lexden. The 50th course was celebrated in July 1985, the 75th in April 1994 and the centenary of courses in the fortyfifth year - 2004. The Lexden Unit is proud of its association with the other Units in this country, whose leaders attended

Lexden courses on the staff and then instituted their own Units back home.

These are the stuff of P.L.T.U. - these are not forgotten.

In proposing a toast to the Lexden P.L.T.U. at the 75th course celebrations, Richard Ballard, a young Scouter returning to the staff after being a participant, senior boy leader and tutor, posed the question: What is it that makes Lexden so special to those involved? He suggests that one reason is that participants and staff leave a course all feeling that they have achieved new limits to that which they believed possible: another is the focus on personal growth of all concerned, with special emphasis on what is now recognized as 'Servant Leadership' in practice: thirdly and more importantly he suggests it is

about comradeship and fellowship and friendships rarely found so strongly or truly anywhere else.

Congratulations to the old timers, Dudley Forde, Fr. Ian Laurensen, Bryan Dibben, Neville Inggs and Craig Shaw, and every Leader who has been involved with Lexden over the years - and now to all the newcomers, Guy Caws, Richard van Dam, Grant Maartens, John McCoy and their assistants who keep the 'flame' alive and have made this celebration possible.



2nd Lexden PLTU Course with Dudley Forde seated in the middle.

BOOK OF NATURE

By H Graf zu Castell-R - Namibia

We suddenly notice the tracks of a Kudu bull. After wandering carelessly through the veld, he clearly stopped for lunch at a green bush, and then strolled to a camelthorn tree, where it stood on its hind legs to reach the lower branches.

The prints indicate that he was suddenly alarmed and fled in wild flight towards the protective mountain kloof. We follow the tracks, and soon discover that the Kudu's alarm was well founded. Next to the sharp antelope hoof-prints are the soft catlike signature of a Cheetah. We examine the new tracks carefully, and detect the claw marks in front of the padded ball marks, distinguishing the tracks of a Cheetah from those of an ordinary leopard. Yes, there can be no doubt that the hunter is the champion runner of the Animal World, and he was giving chase at full speed for, like the greyhound, the prints of it's hind feet are on the outside and in front of those of it's front feet.

The exciting story of the hunt unfolds itself to our observant eye. The Kudu,

leaving deep tracks, follows a weaving path towards safety, but the hunting Cheetah follows his quarry in a straight line, cutting out the curves, and must be closing the gap fast. True enough, we gaze at a chaotic pattern of prints where the proud Kudu was brought to bay, mortally wounded and finally killed. A drag spoor tells us that the Cheetah tried to drag its prey, but found it too heavy. So it ripped the stomach open to reach the soft meat it prefers. The Cheetah's satisfaction in its victory is clearly etched in the sand, where its long tail swept the ground where it feasted. After the meal a lazy roll in the sand, and then a doze in the shade of a green bush.

Not much remains of his victim. A few bones and strips of hide, the once proud pair of horns and the stripped rib bones are scattered over a wide area. The Animal Health Inspector, the Vulture was first to come on the scene. During the night the latecomers arrived for a meal, and take what they can find. We notice the broad soles of the fearless Hyena. He recklessly scatters the others and takes his place, undisturbed by their complaints and stares.

From every direction the tracks of Jackals and other marauders converge on the skeleton to write the concluding paragraph of this drama of nature.

The literature of Nature is an exciting source of adventure for those with the patience to learn the art of spooring.



A PATROL "SPOORING MUSEUM"

One often sees only plaster casts of animal and bird tracks in Patrol dens. Why not plan to provide a full story? Alongside the appropriate spoor casts, show other items connected with the animal or bird: a picture of the animal itself; dried droppings in a small bottle or plastic box; specimens of it's natural food; old evacuated nests; sketches or photographs of its lair, etc. etc.

Every Patrol should make a special effort to collect and display such as the above, that relate to the Patrol's own totem animal or bird.

B-Ps OUTLOOK

LISTEN

A further way of discovering activities that will appeal to the boys is for the Scoutmaster to save his brains by using his ears.

When in war-time a soldier-scout is out at night and wants to gain information of the enemy's moves, he does so to a large extent by listening. Similarly, when a Scoutmaster is in the dark as to what is the inclination or the character of his boys, he can, to a great extent, get it by listening.

'Scouting', the journal of the Boy Scouts of America, gives a delightful article on the value to Scoutmasters of listening. Under the suggestive heading "When a hike stubs its toe," the author urges a Scoutmaster, who is on a hike with his boys and who is cudgeling his brains what to say to them on the subject of observation of nature, to listen what his boys are talking about and to keep his own mouth shut.

They might be arguing together about a prize fight or something equally remote from the study of trees, but,



in listening he will gain a close insight into the character of each boy and a realization of the way in which he can best be interested.

So too, in the Court of Honour debates and Camp Fire talks; If you make listening and observation your particular occupation, you will gain much more information from your boys that you can put into them by your own talk.

A few months ago I put forward a small suggestion in the same direction, namely, when short of ideas don't impose on your Scouts activities which you think they ought to like; but find out from them by listening or by questioning which activities appeal to most of them, and then see how far you can get these going – that is, if they are likely to be beneficial to the boys.

So, too, in giving instruction it is better by far to get your boys to debate a point or to ask you questions than to preach information to them. There's a lot to be got by listening and observing.

The joke about new Scout activities is that they are just like the new toy daddy brings home for the kiddies; daddy is the first to take to playing with the toy himself. Well that is just what it should be in Scouting.

April 1922

SCOUTING'S HERITAGE

I looked in a dictionary to make sure what the word "Heritage" means. Sure I got it right! Heritage – something which is inherited from ones ancestors. Tradition, customs and practices received from those who have gone before. The Scout movement has only been around for just over one hundred years. Does that entitle us to use the term "Scout Heritage"? It sure does!

Not very long ago you could ask an older Scouter, "Did you ever meet B-P?" He would show you his left hand and say "That hand shook hands with B-P;," then go on to tell you of the exact date and function where it happened. How many of these old salts are still around? None of the individuals I have met in the course of my Scouting; they have all gone home. In fact, I realize, that I am the oldest active Scouter in my entire province and I was a boy scout just the other day!

So what 'proof' do we have that Scouting was even around in our country prior to B-P's death? Word of mouth? Not very reliable, as those around now, only heard it from someone else and he, possibly heard it from another source. The only reliable source we have are the old photographs, log books, writings, flags, posters and so many other interesting things lying about our Scout buildings and in cupboards and draws of the old timers.

I have visited "Antique" shops, not only in my own home town, but on overseas visits and have been surprised by the number of Scout items, books, cups, shields, trophies and even a seventy year old, hand written and illustrated Rover log-book on display. He was asking R1000 for it. One fellow had one of our ornate, current Provincial Trophies for sale. It had been

stolen in a break-in at the Scout den only two weeks before. We did recover it!

A Scout Group might cherish the artifacts of their history, especially those Groups who have been in existence for a long time and have been "lucky" that they have had and have an individual who cared about these things. So much of Group history has just disappeared into oblivion with the Group itself. Consider handing over your Group heritage to your Provincial Office where a caring individual, or group of individuals, have been set up to care for and display Scouting's heritage.

Being a Cub is FUN!!



Six new chums join in!

Contributions can be:

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be prepared....